

PROLOGUE

To a New PLAY, called

Venice Preserv'd;

OR

The PLOT Discover'd.

At the Duke's Theatre; Spoken by Mr. SMITH.

11. Feb. 1682

IN these unsettl'd Times, when each man dreads
The Bloody Stratagems of buisy Heads,
When we have fear'd three years I know not what,
Till Witnesses begin to die o'th' Rot,
What made our Poet meddle with a Plot?
Was't that he fanci'd, for the very sake
And name of *PLOT*, his trifling *Play* might take?
For there's not in't one *Inch-board-Evidence*;
But is to each man's reason, plain and sense;
And that he thinks a plausible defence,
Were *Truth* by Sense and Reason to be try'd,
Sure all our *Swearers* might be laid aside.
No, of such Tools our Author has no need,
To make his *Plot*, or make his *Play* succeed.
He of *Black-Bills* has no prodigious Tales,
Of *Spanish Pilgrims* thrown abroad in *Hales*.
Here's not one murder'd Magistrate, at least
Kept rank, like *Venison*, for a *City-Feast*;
Grown four days *Biff*, the better to prepare
And fit his plying Limbs to ride in *Chair*.
Here are no Truths of such a Monstrous Nature;
And some believe there are none such in Nature.
But here's an *Army* rais'd, though *under-ground*,
Yet no *Men* seen, nor one *Commission* found.
Here is a *Traitor*, that's very old,
Turbulent, *subtle*, *mischievous* and bold,
Bloody, *Revengeful*; and to Crown his Part,
Loves fumbling with a *Wench* with all his heart.
And after having many *Changes*, past,
In spite of *Agony*, he's *hang'd* at last.
Next, here's a *Senator*, that keeps a *Whore*,
In *Venice* none a higher Office bore.
To Lewdness every night the *Leacher* ran;
Shew me in *London* such another man.
Match him at *Mother-Cresnets* if you can.
Ah *Poland*, *Poland*, hadst thou been thy Lot,
T' have heard in time of this *Venetian-Plot*,
Thou surely chosen hadst one *Plot* from hence,
And honour'd Them, as thou hast *England* since.

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EPILOGUE

To the Same.

Spoken by Mr. BETTERTON.

THe Text is done, and now for Application:
And when that's ended, give your Approbation.
Tho' the Conspiracy's prevented Here,
Methinks I see another Hatching There.
And there's a certain Faction fain would sway,
If they had strength enough, and damn this Play;
But this the Author boldly bad me say. }
If any take his Plainness in ill part,
He's glad on't from the bottom of his Heart,
Poets in Honour of the Truth should Write,
With the same Courage Brave Men for it Fight.
And tho' against him causeless Hatred rise, }
And daily where he goes of late he spies
The Frowns of fullen and revengeful Eyes.
'Tis what he knows, with much contempt, to bear,
And serves a Cause too good to let him fear.
He fears no Poyson from an incens'd Drab,
No Ruffians five foot Sword, nor Rascals Stab;
Nor any other Snares of Mischief, laid,
Not a *Rose-Ally* Cudgel, Ambuscade.
From any private Cause where Malice Reigns,
Or general Pique, that Blockheads have to Brains.
Nothing shall daunt his Pen when Truth doth call,
No, not the Picture-Mangler at *Guild-Hall*.
The Rebel Tribe (of which that Vermin's one)
Have now set forward, and the Course begun.
And while that Prince's Figure they deface,
Durst their base Fears but look Him in the Face,
As they before had Massacred His Name,
They'd use His Person as they've us'd his Fame.
A Face, in which such Lineaments they Read,
Of that Great Martyr, whose Rich Blood they Shed,
That their Rebellion's Hate they still maintain,
And, in his Son, would Murder Him again.
With Indignation then let each Brave Heart,
Rowze and Unite to take His Injur'd Part,
Till Royal Love and Goodness call Him Home,
And Songs of Triumph meet Him as He come.
Till Heaven His Honour and His Peace Restore,
And Villains never wrong His Vertue more.

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